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The Review of Religions

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CONTENTS

- Zikr-i-Habeeb
- A Study in Bible —Peer Salah-ud-Din
- The Darul Bai'at —M. Barkat Ali Laic
- The Position of Woman in Islam —Ameer Hamza of Borneo, Far Eas
- Has the Bible Suffered from Human Interference —Sh. Ghulam Mujtab

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Vol. XLII July 1943 No. 7

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

ZIKR-I-HABEEB

(The Promised Messiah)

By Sh. Karam Ilahee

Translated from the original in Urdu—Ed.

The incident which I am going to relate in this short note took place some considerable time before the death of the Promised Messiah. As was usual with most of us during the life of the Promised Messiah, I was in Qadian on a short visit. It was summer time, and the weather being very hot, *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers were offered on the roof of the *Masjid Mubarak*. After prayers the Promised Messiah used to sit for some time among his disciples who drank in eagerly the words which fell from his lips.

On the occasion of which I am speaking *Maghrib* prayers were led by Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Kareem who then went into the south-eastern corner of the mosque to offer *sunnat* prayers. When he had finished and came to join the group round the Promised Messiah, his eye happened to fall upon me, and under the spur of the moment, it would appear, he addressed the following remark about me to the Promised Messiah:

"This gentleman from Patiala, who is now sitting before you, was not less of a *naturi* than we used to be; he has studied many books of Sir Syed Ahmad. It was the attraction of your personality and spiritual power alone which pulled him in this direction: otherwise these were not men of a stamp that listen to any one."

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On hearing this remark the Promised Messiah turned to me and said:

"Have you studied the books of Sir Syed Ahmad?"

I replied in the affirmative and mentioned the names of the books I had read.

"What was the motive and incentive behind this study?" the Promised Messiah asked.

"As a member of an educated family," I replied, "I had frequent opportunities to listen to conversation and discourses on religious subjects, and came to acquire bits of information about religions other than my own as well. These circumstances combined to create in me a serious interest in religion even when I was a youth at school. I used to talk about religion to my school-fellows and playmates; and if they found fault with Islam I used to feel impelled to try to reply. If the objection raised happened to be such that I could not tackle it by myself I used to seek the help of the Ulama to whom I had access. But it pained me to find that these Ulama only put me off by saying that it was not for me to get entangled in such discussions; that such matters were best left to them to be dealt with as they thought best. But a study of the books of Sir Syed Ahmad, I found, enabled me to some extent to reply to the objections raised by the opponants of Islam, and naturally they came to have a certain value in my eyes."

"Have you now studied our works as well?" asked the Promised Messiah.

I answered that I had read practically all his Urdu books. Then the Promised Messiah asked me which of Sir Syed Ahmad's books had appealed to me most, and I replied that *Khutbat-i-Ahmadiyyah*, which Sir Syed wrote during his stay in London and in which he refuted the objections of Christian writers on the basis of ancient records and inscriptions, and his *Tabyeenul Kalam* had seemed to me to be the best. Thereat the Promised Messiah remarked that Sir Syed had indeed taken great pains in writing that book (*Khutbat-i-Ahmadiyyah*).

Then the Promised Messiah said to me: "You have studied our books and the works of Sir Syed as well; what difference do you find in his teaching and ours?" To this I felt bound to reply that I was not a very competent person to answer this question. The Promised Messiah said however that it was not his intention that I should make a scholarly comparison; that all he wanted to know was the general difference as I had felt it in my mind. I asked his permission to employ a metaphor or some other such aid to expression if I found the difference too difficult to be expressed in precise terms. The Promised Messiah

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gladly gave me this permission and I said: "The power to refute hostile criticism created by the books of Sir Syed resembled somewhat the case of a traveller in a hot sandy desert when he reached some small pool of dirty turpid water from which he drank a few mouthfuls, just to save his life and to be able to press on for the remainder of his journey. But your teaching in this respect is like a satisfying cup of some cool and refreshing, vital, life-giving liquid that quenched one's thirst completely and gave fresh and redoubled vigour."

When the Promised Messiah heard me say this he smiled. but asked me to illustrate what I said by means of some example, But seeing me hesitate again he said that I could take my time over the answer and that I need not feel myself in any hurry. I therefore thought over the question for some moments in my mind, while inwardly I was also wondering what had impelled Maulvi Abdul Kareem to put me into this predicament. When the Promised Messiah turned to me again after some moments I said: "The question of *Mi'raj* is a good example to illustrate my meaning. Hostile critics ridicule the idea that on this occasion a *Burraq* came down from the skies which took the Prophet on his back and took him to view the Heaven and Hell, and that he moved with such unheard of speed as to cover the limitless spaces of the open void and returned to earth while yet the bed the Prophet had left was warm and the chain of the door by which he had left the room was still swinging and had not come to rest. All that Sir Syed Ahmad did to meet objections of this kind was to say that the occurrence known as *Mi'raj* was no more than a dream which the Holy Prophet had dreamed during the hours of sleep. Evidently, nothing that we see in a dream can be said to be impossible; in a dream a man might see elephants flying with wings like birds of the air and no one had a right to find any fault with it. But a reply of this kind, though it silenced hostile critics, it also deprived the *Mi'raj* of all its significance and meaning. Your teaching on the other hand is that the *Mi'raj* was a spiritual vision of the kind that is called *Kashf* in Islamic terminology, explaining further that this spiritual vision is extended to his servants by God in moments of wakefulness, not during moments of sleep; that these visions embrace wonderful things and carry in them prophecies of big import concerning future events; and that, being visions, they were often to be interpreted rather than taken too literally. Now this explanation on the one hand deals most effectively with the objection that the events which the *Mi'raj* embraces are of an impossible nature, and on the other it does not detract from its value. And when we find that the future events unrolled themselves in accordance with the meaning and significance pointed out in the *Ma'raj* we get some idea of the loftiness of this spiritual experience of the Holy Prophet."

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On hearing this reply from me the Promised Messiah turned to Maulvi Abdul Kareem and said : " You see, Maulvi Sahib ! I put these questions in order to bring out that this gentleman had a spiritual thirst which he was anxious to satisfy, and God out of His mercy guided him to the spring which alone was capable of quenching it. Those who felt no thirst did not care to know which water was good and which was not, and this is the state of mind of those people who have not appreciated our teaching.

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A STUDY IN BIBLE—I

Miscalculations

I. Verses 8 to 27 of Genises 46 read as follows:—

"8. And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's fisrt born."

"9. And the sons of (1) Reuben; (2) Honoch, (3) Phallu, and (4) Hazron, and (5) Carmi."

"10. And the sons of (6) Simeon; (7) Jemuel, and (8) Jamin, and (9) Ohad, and (10) Jachin, and (11) Zohar, and (12) Shaul the Son of a Canaanitish woman."

"11. And the sons of (13) Levi; (14) Gershou, (15) Kohath, and (16) Merati."

"12. And the sons of (17) Judah; (18) Er, and (19) Onan, and (20) Shelah; and (21) Pharez, and (22) Zarah: but Er, and Onan died in the land of Cannan. And the sons of (21) Pharez were (23) Hezron and (24) Hamul."

"13. And the sons of (25) Issachar; (26) Tola, and (27) Phuvah, and (28) Job, and (29) Shimron."

"14. And the sons of (30) Zebulun, (31) Sered, and (32) Elon, and (33) Jahleel."

"15. These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter (34) Dinah: all the souls of his sons and daughters were *thiry and three*."

"16. And the sons of (1) Gad; (2) Ziphion, and (3) Haggi, (4) Shuni, and (5) Ezbon, (6) Eri, and (7) Arodi and (8) Areli."

"17. And the sons of (9) Asher; (10) Jimnah, and (11) Ishuah, and (12) Isui, and (13) Beriah, and (14) Serah, their sister: and the sons of (15) Beriah; (16) Heber and (17) Malchiel."

"18. These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah, his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even *sixteen souls*."

"19. The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife; (1) Joseph, and (2) Benjamin."

"20. And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born (3) Manasseh and (4) Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah Priest of On bare unto him."

"21. And the sons of Benjamin were (5) Belah, and (6) Becher, and (7) Ashbel, (8) Gera, and (9) Naaman, (10) Ehi, and (11) Rosh, (12) Muppim, and (13) Huppim, and (14) Ard."

"22. These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob; all the souls were *fourteen*."

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"23. And the sons of (1) Dan ; (2) Hushim."

"24. And the sons of (3) Naphtali ; Jahzeel, and (5) Guni, and Jezer, and (7) Shillem."

"25. These are sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob ; all the souls were *seven*."

"26. All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were *three-score and six*.

"27. And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls : all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were *three-score and ten*."

In the above verses which have I quoted verbatim I have numbered all the name to be counted so that the calculations made by the author of Genesis at different places may be easily checked.

As the reader must have noted by this time, the persons who migrated to Egypt and are named in verses 8 to 16 are thirty and four and not thirty and three as mentioned in verse 15.

This is a very simple mathematical calculation and needs no lengthy argument in order to prove conclusively the errors of the author of Genesis.

Yet in these very verses there is other evidence to support my contention.

In verse 16 the total number of children begotten through Leah has been stated as 33.

In verse 18 the total number of children begotten through Zilphah is stated as 16.

In verse 22 the total number of children begotten through Rachel is stated as 14.

In verse 25 the total number of children begotten through Bilhah is stated as 7.

Thus the total number of children works up to

$$33+16+14+7=70.$$

Now in verse 26 only those children of Jacob who came with him into Egypt are mentioned to be 66.

Verse 27 mentions that the two sons of Joseph were begotten in Egypt.

Thus Joseph and his two sons are not included in verse 26.

Similarly in verse 12 it is mentioned that "Er and Onan died in the land of Canan."

Hence these five persons are definitely not included in verse 26.

Now if we assume that the calculation of 66 as mentioned in verse 26 is true the total number of the children of Jacob works up to $66+3+2=71$.

This result does not agree with the total of numbers mentioned in verses 16, 18, 22 and 25 which as we have already seen works up to 70 and not 71.

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But if in verse 16 the total stated as 33 is assumed to be false and number 34 is taken to be true then the two results will tally Thus :—

34+16+14+7=71
66+3+2=71

Thus it is proved beyond doubt that the total number of children mentioned as 33 in verse 16 is a miscalculation.

II. We have clearly brought forth in the above lines that the exact number of Jacob's children as mentioned in Genesis works up to 71.

But in Exodus 1 : 4 it is stated, " And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls."

The author of Exodus has either been mistaken by verse 27 of Genesis or has taken the total mentioned in verses 16, 18, 22 and 25 of Genesis—(33+16+14+7=70) for granted without noticing that in fact the total mentioned in verse 16 should be 34 and not 33 as stated there.

Verse 27 of Genesis states " all the souls of the House of of Jacob, which came into Egypt were three score and ten."

Now verse 16 states the number of those persons who came along with Jacob to be 66 Verse 27 mentions that Joseph and his two sons were already in Egypt. Thus the total of the persons who came to Egypt works up to 66+3+Jacob=70. If Jacob is excluded the number will be 69. Thus in this verse the author has included Jacob in the total number of seventy. But in Exodus the total number of the children of Jacob is mentioned as seventy which is quite wrong.

This appreciation shows that whereas the mistake of the author of Genesis in verse 16 was due to a slip of pen and has not been carried into the final calculations made in verses 26 and 27, the mistake on the part of the author of Exodus is due to copying Genesis blindly.

As the mistake which was finally rectified in Genesis has been carried into Exodus we cannot escape the logical conculsion that the author of the two books are two different persons.

This conclusion however may not disagree greatly with the polytheistic doctrine of Christianity. We cannot deny the three Godheads of Trinity the right of freedom of speech and difference of opinion.

But these miscalculations, minor as they may be, bind us down to another and a more serious conclusion, *viz.*, that the author of these chapters was not All-knowing. *In other words, the Bible in our hands is only a man-made book.*

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THE DARUL BAI'AT

Adapted from the Original in Urdu by M. Barkat Ali Laiq—Ed.

The Darul Bai'at at Ludhiana is one of those sacred places which are rightly considered as *Sha'airallah*, or the signs of God, as they create in the heart of man a sense of the recognition of God. Just as prior to the advent of the Holy Prophet of Arabia the affairs of man had all gone wrong and the dark clouds of ظهر الفساد فى البر والبحر were lowering over the world, the mercy of God stirred and a spiritual sun of the most transcending splendour dispersed all the darkness, similarly in these later days when a major portion of the human race strayed away from moral path and began to flounder in spiritual darkness, when the frail bark of human progress and peace was caught in deadly rapids and whirlpools, and when the slender threads snapped off which had represented the precarious connection of man with his Creator, God in His infinite wisdom and mercy raised a *Burooz* of the Holy Prophet of Arabia. In a world swept by the raging seas of irreligion and Godlessness he created Faith in the hearts of men and created firm ground spiritually for them to stand on. He woke up a sleeping world and revivified society; he created a new hope, gave a fresh programme to man and set his face in the right direction which once more brought him face to face with his God. He created sympathy and love as between man and man and welded them up into a single united whole, and after the garden of Islam had been laid waste by autumn winds he tended it with painstaking and loving care so that once more it began to yield its precious fruit.

It was from the Darul Bai'at at Ludhiana that the hand was first extended that was to befriend humanity at one of its darkest hours, that was to guide man out of darkness into light, and was finally to lead him into the august presence of his Creator.

God indeed is Almighty: He can create light out of darkness; he can turn worthless stones into diamonds; and He can turn insignificant particles of sand into precious pearls. When His selective eye fell upon Qadian in an unknown corner of globe, He chose for the great task a man who was no less unknown. But the Divine Selection endowed this Teacher of Persian origin with truly remarkable and extraordinary capabilities, so that his two hands became like vast store-houses of power; and from his fingers there began to flow the precious strands which were to form the warp and woof of a New World

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—of a New Heaven and a New Earth. He made Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian the Promised Messiah, the long expected World Teacher of later days, and entrusted to him the care of the garden of Islam, as well as the task of bringing a floundering world to the safety and peace which Islam offers.

God Almighty says in the Holy Quran :

ان الصفا والمروة من شعائر الله

i.e., "Safaa and Marwa are the signs of God." Now these are two hills in the vicinity of Mecca. Pilgrims to this sacred House of God run from one of these hills to the other during the rites which form part of the pilgrimage. There was a time when all round these two hills there was an absolute howling waste, waterless, burning under sun, where no grass grew, and there was nothing to please the eye or to offer shelter to man. For scores of miles there was no sign of the habitation of man. Naturally this was not a spot which caravans chose to pass by or halt at. But one day a man and a woman approached it and they had a child with them—an infant at the breast of his brother. These were Hazrat Ibraheem, his wife Hajirah, and their infant son Ismaeel. In this desolate waste Hazrat Ibraheem left his wife and son and went away. The scanty provisions he left with them were soon exhausted and death by slow starvation and the maddening torture of a terrible thirst under the blazing tropical sun seemed all that was left for the mother and the child. But no, that was not so; God saved them from this terrible fate and from these two He raised a mighty nation that made this valley its home, as was the Divine Plan in ordering Hazrat Ibraheem to leave his wife and child among these barren hills. The descendants of Ismaeel are today as numberless and widespread as the particles of sand along the beaches of the sea.

When the thirsty child began to cry for water, and evidently was in great distress for want of it, Hazrat Hajirah in her anxiety and anxious search for water began to run from one hill to the other, doing so fully seven times, before God made a spring of water to gush forth from the earth where she had left the crying baby. Hajirah's fortitude and Faith in this ordeal so appealed to God that He has been pleased to keep her sacrifice ever fresh in the mind of man by making *Sa'yee* (running seven times between these hills) a necessary part of the rites pertaining to the pilgrimage. And where formerly there was no sign of man, there is now a well populated city that is held sacred by many nations all over the world.

From this one can form an idea of the way in which God rewards the service and sacrifice of those who are humble and sincere before him ; and from this one can also form some idea of the grandeur and importance which attaches in the sight of God to the Darul Bai'at at Ludhiana.

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As friends are aware, the Darul Bai'at is the house where the Promised Messiah took the first *Bai'at* from his first disciple Hazrat Maulvi Nur-ud-Din, and then from those others who were present on the occasion. When we remember that the Promised Messiah went specially to Ludhiana for the purpose we feel convinced that there must be some big meaning in Ludhiana having been chosen for this purpose.

This first *Bai'at* took place on March 23, 1889, when forty disciples took this pledge "of repentance and obedience," of which it was a necessary condition that henceforth the requirements of Faith would be kept by them above all worldly considerations. For keeping a record of those who took the pledge a register was opened on this occasion on which the Promised Messiah wrote the following with his own hand;

بیعت توبہ برائے حصول تقویٰ و طہارت

i.e., "The pledge of repentance for acquiring purity and the love and fear of God."

Though the Promised Messiah received the Revelation which forms the basis of his claim in March 1882 and gave due publicity to it, he, however, did not begin taking *Bai'at* at that time. Rather, even when any one from among his disciples offered to take *Bai'at*, the Promised Messiah always answered that he had not received the command to do so. In December 1888 he proclaimed his willingness to take *Bai'at* and on January 12, 1889, while rejoicing in a leaflet on the birth of a son he also announced the conditions which were to form part of the pledge of *Bai'at*. The Ahmadiyya Movement and its present Head (Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad) were thus born on the same day, and may in this respect be looked upon as spiritual twins.

In nature and history there are sometimes some very interesting coincidences. The present phase of the history of Mecca began with the birth of a child—Hazrat Ibraheem's son Ismaeel. Similarly the revivification of Islam is found connected with the birth of a son to the Promised Messiah who is the last and the most illustrious Khalifa of the Holy Prophet of Arabia. In a way, therefore, Hazrat Ismaeel forms the first link in the chain of the rise of Islam while Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II forms the last link.

To revert to the Darul Bai'at, however, I may here first give its geographical position. It is situated in Mohallah Jadeed, Kucha Dr. Ahmad Jan, which forms its northern boundary. At present the Darul Bai'at comprises a small beautiful mosque, a small adjoining *hujrah*, two additional rooms and a courtyard. In this courtyard are located a water handpump, a bath room and a W. C. The mosque and rooms are fitted with electricity. In the southern portion there is a piece of vacant land which can suffice for a small family quarter to be built upon it.

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The doors of the rooms open into the street on one side, and on the other they open into the mosque and the courtyard. In the eastern room is lodged the local Ahmadiyya library. The sacred spot upon which the Promised Messiah sat when he took the first *Bai'at* is situated along the eastern wall of this room by the side of the southern corner.

Munshi Ahmad Jan is the name of a saintly person of great spiritual eminence who passed away from this world sometime before the Promised Messiah began to take *Bai'at*. The piece of land which comprises the Darul Bai'at originally belonged to Munshi Ahmad Jan. In a portion of it he had his living quarters, while in a part there was his *Langarkhana* from where free meals were served to his disciples and guests and the needy who might come to his door. Munshi Ahmad Jan was a *peer* of standing who had a wide circle of admirers and disciples. Being a man of great spiritual vision, thoroughly sincere and selfless, he very soon recognised the Promised Messiah for what he was—in fact Munshi Ahmad Jan recognised him even before he had put forth any claim to the position to which God had decided to raise him. Munshi Ahmad Jan is the author of the following two lines which he addressed to the Promised messiah :

ہم غریبوں کی ہے تمہیں پہ نظر
تم مسیحا بنو خـــدا کیلئے

i. e. "We, the sick and the suffering have our eyes fixed upon thee ; be thou pleased, therefore to assume the role of the healing physician for us."

As was mentioned above, Munshi Ahmad Jan passed away from this world before the Promised Messiah had begun to take *Bai'at*, but a large number of his disciples, as well as the surviving members of his family, joined the Ahamdiyyah Movement. Peer Mukhtar Ahmad and Peer Manzur Ahmad are the names of his two sons who are both now living in Qadian. Peer Manzur Ahmad has won great fame as the inventor of *Yassarnal Quran*, a primer designed to enable beginners to read the Holy Quran very easily. After some time the two brothers sold off the portion which had formed the living quarter, and made a gift of the portion which had constituted the *Langarkhana* to the Sadar Anjuman Ahmadiyyah, Qadian, whose property it now is. Originally it was a *kachcha* house.

Sometime later on the Sadar Anjuman Ahmadiyyah gave this property into the custody of the local Ahmadiyyah Jama't. The local Jama't through the grace and mercy of God was able in 1917 to make some improvements in it and to make certain alteration in the structures on the sight. In the north a long, well ventilated room was built of baked bricks, with its northern wall bearing an inscription which showed that

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it was the Darul Bai'at and the date (March 23, 1889) on which the first *Bai'at* had taken place. In the courtyard a platform of bricks was built, with a *mahrab*, which was meant for prayers. But the two *kachcha* rooms in the south were left as they were. These, owing to the ravages of the sun and rain, collapsed after some time.

Once Meer Inayat Ali, who is an old disciple of the Promised Messiah, expressed a difference of opinion as to the exact spot where the Promised Messiah had sat while he took the first *Bai'at*. As opposed to the spot which is accepted by all, he pointed to a place opposite to it in the southern room. The other disciples who were themselves present when the *Bai'at* took place have agreed that Meer Inayat Ali's memory has made a slip on this point. In order to remove this difference of opinion and decide the matter once for all times, Hazrat Khalifatul Mssiah II, in 1931, broke his journey at Ludhiana while on his way back to Qadian from Maler Kotlah; and he specially sent for Munshi Zafar Ahmad from Kapurthala who was present on the occasion of the first *Bai'at*. By this investigation carried out personally by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II, an investigation in which eye witnesses of the first *Bai'at* participated, the difference of opinion caused through a lapse of memory on the part of Meer Inayat Ali was definitely removed.

Some years ago the attention of the Headquarters of the Movement turned to the Darul Bai'at and an appeal was issued for funds with a view to the building of a suitable structure on the sight. But the appeal, perhaps, was half-hearted and realised only about a thousand rupees. In 1938 Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad designed the mosque to be built on the site, which cost a sum of eight hundred rupees. It may be mentioned here that in Ludhiana this mosque is perhaps the only one which, according to the compass, is set exactly facing Mecca in the position which it ought to occupy from the point view of its geographical situation.

It is not without interest to note that just as the birth of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II coincided with the inception of the Ahmadiyyah Movement, now again the building of the mosque on the site of the Darul Bai'at coincided with the year and the time when his Khilafat Silver Jubilee was celebrated. In short the Darul Bai'at seems to have some hidden affinity with the person of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II; and I would venture to say that the Darul Bai'at, which is one of the most important signs of God in the custody of Ahmadiyyah Movement, stands in need of his constant attention so that its outward appearance too might come to reflect some of the spiritual grandeur at least which belongs to it.

Members of the Ahmadiyyah Community in general too

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should realise their responsibility in the matter of the Darul Bai'at.

Those who are in touch with the daily press know that Death Destruction stalk in Europe. Human blood there has become so cheap that it is literally flowing in torrents. At the expense of untold millions of money a wild carnival in human blood is being indulged in. Battleships and other monsters of naval warfare sail the seas to dash themselves against each other, and incalculable amounts of wealth have been sunk to the bottom of the ocean in various forms. Towns and inhabited places are being laid waste, smiling fields are torn by shell craters, and beautiful palaces in a moment become mere heaps of ruins. And with all this civilised Europe is claiming that when this war is over it would create a New Order which would ensure peace and prosperity to man in future. But nations whose efforts in the past have remained confined to the material world, the foundations of their New Order too would go no higher; they again would remain confined to material things. But for the construction of a material New Order, which, it should be well borne in mind, is much less difficult than the construction of a Spiritual New Order, Europe is spending money like water. The gold which it had gathered from all over the globe at the cost of great personal and moral sacrifices, is now being blown into the air in the form of explosives, or is being sunk to the bottom of the sea. Here there is a lesson for us, and let the members of the Ahmadiyyah Community pause to consider it. The weight of responsibility placed on our shoulders is far more heavy, for the infinitely greater task of creating a Spiritual New Order has been entrusted to us... the New Order of which the foundation was laid by the Promised Messiah when he took that first memorable and historical *Bai'at*

May I venture to suggest that in the funds of the Movement there should be a permanent fund under the name *Darul Bai'at* so that, as opportunity might arise, the neighbouring houses may be aquired for the Jama'at to build a suitable Hall, a Guest House, a Library, and a Reading Room to serve as a centre for the *tabligh* of the Movement.

In any case a family quarter should be built as soon as possible so that a caretaker may live on the premises and give the call to prayer from the mosque five times a day. The condition in which we keep the *Darul Bai'at* would be reflected in our lives and in the peace and prosperity of our own homes.

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POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

By Amir Hamza of Borneo, Far East

One of the accusations of the opponents of Islam, which always surprises me, is the assertion that Islam keeps the position of woman low. As yet I have not succeeded in finding out on what ground this assertion is based ; certainly not on the Quran at any rate, as nowhere have I found in that Holy Book as much as a single verse indicating, or even hinting in the slightest degree, that the position of woman should be an inferior one. On the contrary, the verses dealing with her rights state clearly that the position of woman in Islam is as honourable as that of man in every respect.

As regards her social position, we read in the Holy Quran (surah IV : 32) :—

" Men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn."

I know that many a woman of other religions would jump up with joy if this Islamic injunction were to be put into practice in their doctrine.

الرجال قوامون على النساء بما فضل الله بعضهم على بعض و
بما انفقوا من اموالهم فالصلحت قنتت حفظت للغيب بما
حفظ الله (النساء : ٦)

" Men are superior to women on account of the qualities with which God hath gifted the one above the other, and on account of the outlay they make from their substance for them. Virtuous women are obedient and careful during the husband's absence, as Allah has guarded " (IV, 34.)

The true position of woman as observed in nature is clearly set forth in this verse.

Man is physically and intellectually superior to the weaker vessel, and that is why he occupies a higher position in the physical world. To him is entrusted the culture and nurture of his wife and children and to her, his wife, are entrusted the household duties and the control of all domestic affairs.

The husband earns and brings in, the wife guards and manages the earnings of her husband. The good man labours for the support and sustenance of her and her progeny, the good wife preserves the honour and chastity of herself and her husband. Without the one, the other could not do. Notwithstanding the apparent inferiority of woman in body and mind, their lives are inter-dependent.

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The Holy Book says in the above verse that man is the mainstay of woman, because she being physically weak is unable to make her own living. But this physical inferiority is not to reduce her to a parasite. Both have certain duties to each other. If it is the duty of man to purvey for his family, it is the duty of woman to nurse the children and keep intact for the sake of her husband the honour and chastity of the houehold in his absence. Thus the functions assigned to either sex are in perfect conformity with its nature and temperament. The stronger sex has to play the active and laborious part, while the softer sex the quiet and smooth one. Yet neither can live independently of the other.

How wisely the kind Heaven has provided for the disabilities of the female. Let she have many a return of her menstruations, let she have many a recurring period of pregnancy, let she have even twins suckling at her breast, she has nothing to do with the fever of the world. Home is her little world, the prattle of the children is to her a music, a thousand time sweeter than the turmoil and hurry skurry of the world. The home is her right place, without doubt.

This superioriy of man again is not a source of hatred and cortempt towards the female sex, but it is to establish their respective spheres of life beyond the least possible vestige of doubt so that the human species may be freely propagated in a peaceful and charming atmosphere.

If there had been perfect equality in their physical conditions, there would have been no arrangements for the rearing and bringing up of children : the female with her emotional nature and restless faculties would not have liked to lead a life within the four walls.

" And covet not that by which God hath raised some of you above others. The men shall be rewarded according to their actions and the women shall be rewarded according to their actions. Of God, therefore, ask His grace. Verily God hath knowledge of all things. (IV, 32)

In this verse God commands both the sexes that one should not be cast down on account of her inferior physique, nor the other puffed up on account of his superior constitution, because this disparity in physical condition does not mean much for the purpose of the real object of humanity.

Righteousness is the goal ; and the physical condition, be it weak or strong, does not count for much in the pursuit of that object. Both are required to do good deeds in their own spheres and win the approbation of their Creator, who knows all about them, who knows under what advantages or disadvantages each of them in working. Both are commanded to pray for the grace of God.

It is now easy to see how woman and man are demanded by the divine will to pull on together in life. Both will reap the fruits of their own doings and therefore neither of the two can

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have the hardihood to encroach upon, or in any way look down upon the other.

These verses of the Holy book contrast favourably with the words of *St. Paul* :—

" As the Church is subjected to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything ".

" O man, fear your Lord, who hath created you from one soul and of his kind created his wife, and from there hath spread abroad so many men and women. And fear ye God in whose name ye ask mutual favours—and reverence the wombs that bear you. Verily God is watching you" (The Quran IV : 1). This verse embodies a pointed and positive commandment about the kind treatment to be accorded to women.

Man and woman proceed from the same origin, being one and the same in nature and essence, therefore it is ordered that man finding woman weak and frail may not feel inclined to slight her or make light of her position.

He is commanded to fear God who is the Creator of woman quite as much as man, and to show due respect for the female relations.

The injunction is very broad in its significance and very comprehensive in its application. All the female relations are included therein.

Whatever be the position of man, a king or a coolie, and under whatever circumstances he may chance to be, he is ordered by Islam to show proper respect for all the female relations, wife, mother, sister, daughter. No disrespect and disregard of their rights and claims is to be tolerated in Islam.

It is related that the Holy Prophet Mohammed (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) used to stand up when Fatma, his beloved daughter approached him.

The Prophet Mohammed (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) when drinking from the cup of his wives used to put that side of the cup to his mouth from where they had drunk. What a sublime example it is for showing to the sterner sex how they should behave towards women.

I challenge that no other religion in the world elevates the position of woman as did the Holy Prophet Mohammed (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him).

The votaries of every religion have much to say about the rights of woman, but unfortunately the views they claim have no basis in their scriptures.

هن لباس لكم و انتم لباس لهن

They (the wives) are a garment for you and you are a garment for them.

In this verse God illustrates the relation of wife and husband in a beautiful analogy. The husband is a garment for his

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better half, who in turn is a garment for him. The analogy is perfectly illustrates the case. Similarly husband and wife rejoice in each other's company. The one is a source of comfort and happiness for the other. Man is naturally inclined to companionship. His wife is for him a loving companion indeed. Again wife and husband safeguard each other against immorality.

Thirdly, the homestead is dull and gloomy without a wife. She therefore imparts a graceful tone to the household.

و جعل بينكم مودة و رحمة

He hath placed between you love and tenderness. A sentiment of love and kindness is to regulate their attitude and behaviour towards each other.

"And deal kindly with them, and if you hate them, don't put them away, for it may happen that you hate a thing wherein God hath placed abundant good." (IV, 19)

God expressedly enjoins upon man to mete out kind treatment to his wife and do his best to put up with her for God's sake even though she turn out not to be to his liking.

The husband is not allowed to take back anything from his wife at the time of divorce, however large treasures of gold he may have lavished upon her. Besides, he has no right to keep her in his house against her will, after the divorce.

At another place God says :

And if a wife fear ill-usage or aversion on the part of her busband, then shall it be no fault in them if they agree with mutual agreement, for agreement is best. Men's souls are prone to avarice, but if they act kindly and piously then, verily, their actions are not unnoticed by God.

Here a free appeal is made to their spirit of toleration. Should there spring up ill-feelings between husband and wife, it is advisable for them to come to terms and take all possible steps to bring back concord and good-will. In short, the wife is to the husband a source of blissful happiness, a cause of pride and manly grace, a true friend; and so is the husband to the wife.

Thehusband is not allowed to usurp the property of his wife in any way and has to pay her the dowry fixed quite willingly. Thus it is clear beyond the shadow of doubt that the position of womanhood in Islam is pre-eminently nobler and higher than that kept up by other religions.

We are not in a position to say what was the ideal of Jesus Christ in this respect because he did not marry at all. But if his views are to be commensurate with his conduct, his life long celibacy cannot fail to throw a side-light on his inner feelings towards woman.

Jesus Christ's insult to the mother that bore him also stands on record.

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HAS THE BIBLE SUFFERED FROM HUMAN INTERFERENCE

Translated from the original in Urdu
by Sh. Ghulam Mujtaba—Ed.

A monthly magazine called *Nairang-i-Khiyal* (نیرنگ خیال) is published from Lahore. From its rules and regulations it appears that its aims and objects are purely literary, and it has no desire to attack the religious beliefs or principles of any religious sect. But in its issue of April 1943 there has appeared an article under the heading *Aaeen-i-Fitrat* (آئین فطرت) of which the author is Dr. Ghulam Geelanee, Ph.D., of Campbellpur. We would not have had anything to say in connection with this article if it had confined itself to the field to which the *Nairang-i-Khiyal* is devoted, but the learned writer has discussed in it a religious subject, and while doing so he has strung up into an argument, a number of irrelevant things and evident fallacies, most of which run counter to the teachings of the Holy Quran, though Dr. Ghulam Geelanee has made the Ahmadees the main target for reproof. Dr. Ghulam Geelanee writes :

> The Ahmadees and the other maulvees, by producing an abundant literature against the Torah, the Injeel, the Geeta and the Vedas, have done great harm to the high ideal of Islam.

Summed up briefly, Dr. Ghulam Geelanee's argument is that the Holy Quran has not cancelled previous scriptures like the Vedas and the Books of the two Testaments ; that the ancient scriptures are even to-day quite free from human interference, in their original pure form, and therefore quite trustworthy. In my brief article I propose to show that Dr. Ghulam Geelanee's idea is entirely wrong ; that human interference with the ancient scriptures was possible, that it actually took place, and that the Holy Quran holds them to have been interfered with.

It should first of all be noted that all religions are based on some scripture or other, and for these scriptures to continue to exist it is necessary that their text (*i.e.*, the words of these books) should remain pure and free from human interference, both deliberate and unintentional. It is not enough that the meaning and the general sense alone should continue to exist. For, what comes from God are the words ; the meaning and the sense represent an interpretation of the words by the human mind and are therefore liable to change from time to time, and in the case of different individuals. For a true religion therefore, it is indispensable that the text of its scripture should remain free from interpolations of all kinds. Conversely, those

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religions cannot be regarded to be true in their present form of which the scriptures are not found in their original purity.

Now let us take the case of the Bible. We hold that the Books which comprise the Old and the New Testament have been interfered with by man and therefore are no longer trustworthy in the sense in which a religious scripture should be trustworthy if it is to form the basis of all those rules and regulations which are to govern our conduct. And when they are not trust-worthy, they are of no use to us in our spiritual strivings. Our argument in support of this view is that the words of these Books have been altered ; some passages have been taken out, while others have been put in so that the original meaning has been lost altogther. We also deduce from this that it was not the Divine Will that these scriptures should continue pure to the end of time, for otherwise God certainly would have taken steps to safeguard their text from interference. It appears from the Holy Quran that God never undertook to safeguard the Bible ; but in the case of the Holy Quran itself this promise of Divine Protection is very clear, very conclusive and very emphatic.

In the Holy Quran we read :

انا انزلنا التورات فيها هـدى و نور يحكم بها النبيون الذين اسلموا للذين هادوا والربانيون والاحبار بما ستحفظوا من كتاب الله و كانوا عليها شهيداً -

In this verse God Almighty says that indeed He had sent down the Torah which comprised Light and Guidance. This is in regard to the origin of the Torah ; as for its protection against human interference, the answer is contained in the latter portion of the verse where it says that the Prophets and the learned men among the Jew used to decide their disputes in accordance with it, and they were charged with the duty of safeguarding it. Now as for the Prophets, they ceased to appear among the Israelites after they had rejected Jesus and nailed him to the cross ; while the *rabbaniyoon* and the *ahbar* had fallen away grievously from the path of righteousness and the fear of God. Some expressions used by the Holy Quran in regard to them are :—

سماعون للكذب اكلون للسحت *i.e.*, given to lying and the eating of forbidden things ; لياكلون اموال الناس بالباطل *i.e.*, they eat the substance of other people in illegal ways. This was the state of their mind in regard to material things. Their attitude in matters more particularly pertaining to religion may be judged from their attitude towards the Prophets which the Holy Quran describes as قتل انبياء and says و يقتلون النبيين بغير الحق (*i.e.*, they slay (or try to) slay the Prophets unjustly.) David in the Psalms prays to God about them thus :—

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Destroy thou them, O God ; let them fall by their own counsels ; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions, for they have rebelled against thee. (Psalm V.)

And Jesus Christ has expressed his opinion in regard to them in the following words :—

Woe unto you scribes, and pharisees hypocrites ! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanliness. (Mt. 23 : 27.)

This description leaves no room for doubt that Dr. Ghulam Geelanee is wrong in his estimate of the moral condition of the Jews when he says that no religious people can be so unscrupulous as to pervert their own religious writings. The Holy Quran is very clear on the point that the Jews interfered with the text of their scripture. It says :—

فويل للذين يكتبون الكتاب بايديهم ثم يقولون هذا من عند الله۔

i.e., woe to those who produce the writing with their own hands and then say, " this is from God." In another place it says : و يحرفون الكلم عن مواضعه *i.e.*, they remove words from their proper places. In regard to the Christians the Holy Quran says :—و لنسوا حظاً مما ذكروا به *i.e.*, they ignored a portion of what had been given to them as reminder. And the following words are as clear as anything can be :—

ولا تزال تطلع على خائنة منهم

i.e., cases of their dishonesty (in safeguarding their religious books) will continue to come to light. In other words, interference on the part of the people of the Book with their sacred writings would continue through all time.

And with our own eyes we see this prophecy of the Holy Quran coming true with each new edition of the Bible. The changes made in regard to the " ten thousand saints " (Deut. 33-2) and the " sign of Jonah " (Mt.) are too well known for anyone to deny.

From these references it becomes evident that the Bible has been interfered with ; and when it is admitted that it has suffered from human interference it has to be conceded that it is no longer trustworthy as a scripture upon which one could base one's life.

Let us now turn to the Holy Quran. The task of safeguarding it against interference has not been left to the Muslims : Almighty God Himself undertook to preserve its purity of text. He says : انا نحن نزلنا الذكر و انا له لحافظون *i.e.*" We have sent down the Quran and We ourselves shall guard it." In point of fact, too, we find that although nearly fourteen conturies have passed since the Holy Quran was revealed, its text has admitted-

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ly remained pure. Among the *Khawarij*, the *Rawafiz* and the *Shias* there are people who are violently ill disposed towards many who played a conspicuous part in the collection of the Holy Quran, but the Quran in the hands of them all is the same.

After these general remarks in principle I take the points raised by the learned Doctor one by one. He writes :—

> The generality of Muslims believe that with the coming of the Holy Quran all previous Books have been cancelled. This belief is self-made, baseless and entirely wrong. If for a minute this view is accepted as correct, I ask what would you say in regard to those people whom the Holy Quran has not reached, or it reached them late ; or it reached them but they could not understand it. After all the Holy Quran was revealed in Arabic ; and between Arabia on the one hand and Japan and America, for instance, there is a distance of thousands of miles, and the means of communication did not exist. Could not these people learn the lesson of truthfulness, honesty, sincerity, and the obedience and fear of God from their own religious books ; and until the Holy Quran reached them, were they free to indulge in sin ? The older books had been cancelled while the new one had not yet reached them. Could they follow their own books in this predicament ? If they could not, then what were they to do ?

Of course the Holy Quran has cancelled all previous Books, but a guiding principle of the Holy Quran is لا يكلف الله نفسا الا وسعها *i.e.*, God does not tax anyone beyond his capacity. This principle entirely removes the difficulty felt by Dr. Ghulam Geelanee. Those whom the Quran did not reach or who remained ignorant of its teachings, they were free from blame. This principle holds true to the end of days. If a man is unaware of the Quran even to-day but he is of good nature and lives accordingly, he would not be held guilty by God. Denial and opposition, or acceptance and living in conformity to its principles presupposes access to the Quran : when it has not come before a people the question of denial or acceptance does not arise.

Another argument is stated by Dr. Ghulam Geelanee as follows :—

> When the commandments of the Torah and the Quran are similar why should cup of the latter be abrogated ? To break one thoseand then to make another quite like the one you broke to pieces is meaningless, absurd and foolish. What is the sense in a set of commandments being abrogated and the same being put into force again. The idea is so absurd that it is impossible to imagine anything more absurd than this that the commandments of the Torah and the Injeel were abrogated only to be put into force again.

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This point too has been dealt with in the Holy Quran. It says :

ما ننسخ من آية او ننسها نات بخير منها او مثلها

i.e., Whatever sign or command is abrogated, God replaces it by another better than it, or by one like it. In this verse the reason for this replacement, too, is clearly stated.

Dr. Ghulam Geelanee writes further :

> Some maulvees say that the Torah and Injeel commended in the Quran were the Books given to Hazrat Musa and Isa, not the Books that were in the hands of the Jews at the time when the Quran was sent down. If their text had suffered in purity, why did the word of God speak of them as true ? Here is a verse which does so very clearly و عندهم التوراة فيها حكم الله *i.e.* And with them they have the Torah in which there is the command of God.

In quoting this verse, however, the learned Doctor has left out a portion without which the verse cannot be properly understood. It runs as follows :—

كيف يحكمونك و عندهم التوراة فيها حكم الله

The circumstances in which this verse was revealed are these : The Jews of Medina used to bring their disputes to the Holy Prophet. On one occasion they brought up a man and a woman accused of adultery. The accused being Jews, the Holy Prophet inquired what was the punishment for this offence in the Torah. The Jews said that their faces were blackened and they were mounted on donkeys and paraded through the streets in this disgraced condition. But the Holy Prophet, in order to assure himself more fully on the point, asked for the Torah to be brought to him, and when this was done he asked the Jews to read out the relevant portion to him. In the text, however, which a man began to read, the punishment prescribed was stoning to death. But the man skipped these important words and hid them under his hand. Among those present was Abdullah bin Salam who was a Jew converted to Islam, and he was a learned man. He informed the Holy Prophet about the dishonesty committed in the passage being read out to him and the two accused were then stoned to death. The verse in question refers to cases such as the one stated above. It says that the Jews in submitting their disputes to the Holy Prophet were not sincere, for had they been sincere they would have preferred to have their cases settled in accordance with the laws embodied in the Torah. But, strangely enough, Dr. Ghulam Geelanee is of opinion that this verse declares the truth of the Torah !

The next point raised by Dr. Ghulam Geelanee is the following :

> The argument is sometimes heard that the laws of Moses and the other Prophets were meant for particular people

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during particular periods, while the Quran is universal both as regards time and the people for whom it is meant. Therefore all previous scriptures have been cancelled. This argument is no more than a fraud. In the time of Moses, was righteousness of conduct meant for the Israelites only? Were the Copts forbidden to be pure, humble and devoted before the Lord? Could a Copt plead before God that he could not become righteous because the Torah was meant only for the Israelites?

The view expressed by Dr. Ghulam Geelanee in the above passage denotes that he has not properly grasped the teachings of Islam. The opinion expressed by him has no place in Islam because from the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet it is crystal clear that the missions of the preceding Prophets were limited to their own particular peoples; they were not charged with the duty of guiding the whole world. Accordingly we find that the Prophets mentioned by name in the Quran are all such as were sent to their own particular peoples only. None of them was ordered to say انی رسول الله الیکم جمیعا (I am an apostle to you all). This worldwide mission was entrusted to the Holy Prophet alone. In *Sahih Bukharee* we read:

کان النبی یبعث الی قومه خاصة و بعثت الی الناس کافة۔

(Formerly a Prophet was sent to his own people, but I have been sent for the whole of mankind.) The Holy Prophet held this fact to be one of the five things which distinguished him from the other Prophets.

A further proof of the fact that the other Prophets were sent to their own particular people lies in the actual practice followed by these people through the ages. The Jews do not admit a non-Israelite into their religion. The Parsees too do not admit non-Parsees. The attitude of the Vedic Aryans also has been the same. If they have started a *Shuddhi* movement now, there are Hindus, in the first place, who hold that such a movement is not permissible; secondly the present movement has risen out of political motives. And Jesus Christ's mission was only to gather together the "lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Islam, on the other hand, addressed itself to all peoples and nations and gained converts from among the Persians and the Abyssinians and other neighbouring nations in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet himself.

In short, it stands conclusively proved from the Holy Quran that the previous Prophets were sent to their own particular peoples. In the Quran we also read:

و ان من امة الا خلافیها نذیر

i.e., there is no nation to whom a warner was not sent

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The Copt. Dr. Ghulam Geelanee has in mind had his own law to follow under this verse until the Quran should reach him. But a belief so clearly based on the Quran and the *Hadeeth* is called a fraud by the learned Doctor who, we presume, claims to be a Muslim. This is very strange.

Further on Dr. Ghulam Geelanee writes :—

> It is my firm belief that the God of the Quran and the Prophet of the Muslims had full faith in the Torah and the Injeel which were in the hands of the Jews and the Christians at that time.

Again :—

> If some wicked Christian or Jew had made alterations in the Injeel or the Torah, why did the other Jews and Christians allow or suffer it.

Again :—

> Interference with sacred texts should have some aim, some motive ; for instance love of money and greed, luxurious living, the desire to make adultery and wine permissible, etc. But in the Torah and the Injeel there is no passage to countenance such deeds.

But we have already quoted the opinion of the Holy Quran in regard to the moral condition of the Jews, and we pass on after quoting one more verse. It says :—

لعن الذين كفروا من بنى اسرائيل على لسان داود و عيسىٰ ابن مريم بما عصوا و كانوا يعتدون ۔ كانوا لا يتناهون عن منكر فعلوه ۔ لبئس ما كانوا يفعلون ۔

i.e., Those among the sons of Israel who were guilty of denial, they were cursed by David and Jesus Christ because they had been disobedient and they had transgressed. They did not prevent each other from the evil things to which they were addicted.

In the end we would like to ask the learned Doctor what he thinks of the following two verses of the Holy Quran :—

(1) لقد كفر الذين قالوا ان الله هوا المسيح ابن مريم

(2) لقد كفر الذين قالوا ان الله ثالث ثلثه

i.e., (1) " Indeed they have been guilty of *Kufr* who said Allah is Masih son of Mary, " and (2) " Indeed they have been guilty of *Kufr* who said Allah is third out of the three. "

Do not these verses show that the *Injeel* given to Jesus Christ has been altered by his followers to lend support to their erroneous belief in a trinity of God ?

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